

# ‘Free Mumia’ echoes in D.C.

By Jamila K. Wilson  
Washington, D.C.

“What else do you need to know about this case? There was a fourth person at the scene of the crime. That person was identified as the shooter. The presence of a fourth person was concealed at trial, and on those bases we are saying that Mumia Abu-Jamal must be immediately released!”

With these words, Dr. Johanna Fernandez of Educators for Mumia and a lead organizer of the April 24 Occupy Department of Justice demonstration and civil disobedience action, set the tone for the day’s energy by providing specific details about Abu-Jamal’s case that has, up until now, been intentionally ignored by mainstream media. Fernandez, a professor at Baruch College at the City University of New York, also spoke about the federal investigation done in 1979 by the DOJ on the entire Philadelphia Police Department for corruption and brutality charges.

Over 1,000 demonstrators were privy to the experience of a rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal — a space that invokes diversity, creativity and love. The event was categorized as a “Festival for the Oppressed” as well as serving as a celebration for Abu-Jamal’s 58th birthday. Abu-Jamal was falsely railroaded to Pennsylvania death row in 1982. Due to decades of mass pressure, his death sentence was overturned in 2011. He is presently serving a life sentence in a Frackville, Pa., prison.

People received information from local, national and international organizations that are providing alternatives and resources for people who exist not only in the 99%, but in the bottom 1%. Speakers from organizations including the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the International Action Center, the Free Mumia Coalition (NYC), the Bradley Manning Support Committee, Returning Citizens, Students Against Mass Incarceration, Tucson’s May 1 Coalition and the National Lawyers Guild shared statements of solidarity for Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners as well as addressed issues of wealth disparity, racist profiling as epitomized with Trayvon Martin’s murder and the decimation of social programs.

Among the activists, community members, youth and elders present from all over the East Coast, as well as a delegation from France, was Public Enemy’s Chuck D, the voice of hip-hop’s resistance and self-determination.

“Connect yourself to the planet people. When you hear people talking about, ‘I wish consciousness will come back.’ It’s already here! It might not be here in large quantities, but it’s here in large quality.” His

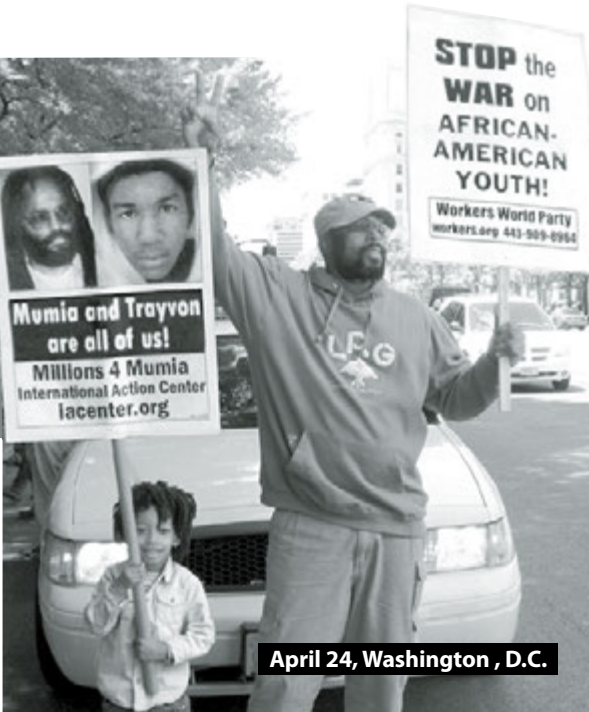
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FIGHT REPRESSION

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WW PHOTO: MONICA MOOREHEAD

**Next, May 20 in Chicago**  
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MAY DAY targets the 1%



New York City



Milwaukee



New York City

As we go to press, organizers say that more than 100,000 people participated in May Day actions in New York City, which started with Occupy events in many locations and culminated in a huge march from Union Square to Wall Street organized by a coalition of immigrants, unions and Occupy activists. See next week’s WW for full coverage.

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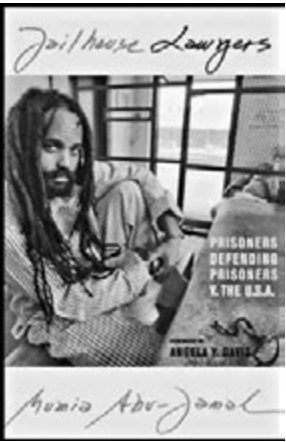
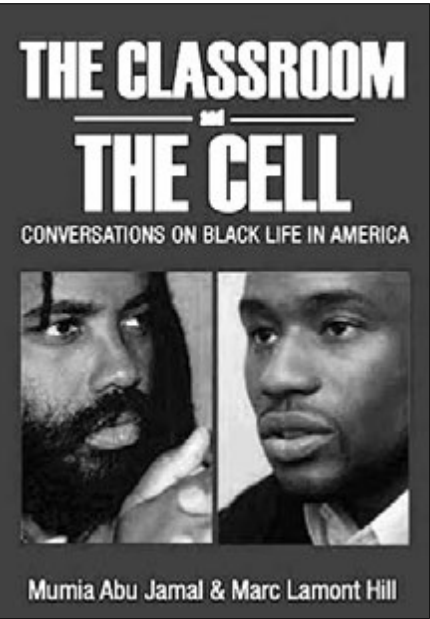
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# Fight to save Philadelphia schools

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

The wholesale privatization of Philadelphia public schools is underway. A broad-based movement will be needed to stop it.

A decade ago, protests by students and parents temporarily blocked the massive privatization of Philadelphia's schools by the for-profit education management corporation, Edison Schools — now Edison Learning Inc. Once again, an attempt is now being made to turn over control of education in the fifth-largest U.S. city to a handful of for-profit corporations.

This January, the unelected Philadelphia School Reform Commission, after announcing that the district was “on the brink of financial disaster,” appointed former Philadelphia Gas Co. CEO, Thomas Knudsen, as district “recovery” officer.

Knudsen will be paid \$150,000 for six months' work. His first “cost-cutting” measure was to award a “short-term” \$6 million contract to The Boston Group to implement \$61 million in budget cuts over the next six months. He is calling for more than half a billion dollars in cuts by 2017.

Knudsen's recommendations are to close 40 “low-performing, underutilized” schools in 2013 and 24 more by 2017. The remaining 185 schools in the district would be broken up into “achievement networks” of about 25 schools each, to be run by private companies who bid for management contracts. The number of charter schools, now handling about 25 percent of the city's roughly 200,000 students, would increase to accommodate 40 percent.

Washington Post blogger Karen Strauss described Knudsen's proposal as a “desperate Hail Mary pass with no more chance of succeeding than previous efforts.” (April 28)

The plan is also clearly an attack on school workers and their unions. The central school district office staff, already only half of what it was last year, would be further reduced from 600 to 250 workers. Cuts in wages and benefits would total \$156 million.

More than 2,500 blue-collar union jobs will be outsourced, forcing workers to give up wages and benefits. Knudsen calls for the “renegotiation” or even “abrogation” of existing school employee union contracts.

Philadelphia Federation of Teachers President Jerry T. Jordan described Knudsen's proposal as “a cynical, right-wing and market-driven plan to privatize public education, to force thousands of economically disadvantaged families to select from an under-funded hodgepodge of EMO [education management organizations] and charter company-run schools and to convert thousands of professional and family-sustaining positions into low-paying, high-turnover jobs.” (TheNotebook.org, April 24)

## Disaster capitalism

The 2011-12 Reform Commission budget made draconian cuts in Philadelphia's already underfunded schools. Knudsen's plan for 2013-17 promises even more. It contains no provisions for smaller classrooms, art and music, school libraries, full-time nurses or adequate security. And the promise of better education through charter schools has proven illusory.



Helen Gym, a mother of three, told Knudsen, “You're not speaking for me.” Gym, a community organizer active in addressing conflicts between Asian and African-American students at a South Philadelphia high school, described the Knudsen Plan as “disaster capitalism that tries to shock a besieged public with unproven, untested, and drastic action couched as ‘solutions’.”

Gym challenged Knudsen's use of terms like “achievement networks” and “right-sizing” schools when there is no plan to reduce class sizes or increase support personnel, noting that “seat expansion” just means “larger class sizes without extra funds.” Gym went on to criticize the plan to “expand charter populations willy-nilly despite a national study showing two-thirds of Philadelphia charters are no better or worse than district-managed schools.” (TheNotebook.org, April 24)

It's not just in Philadelphia. A new University of Texas study found African-American high school students in Texas are three times more likely to drop out from a charter system than from a regular public school. The rate for students who leave school because of transfers to another state, homeschooling or by being



WW PHOTOS: JOE PIETTE

Philadelphia students protest school closings and cuts in staff.

expelled was 5 percent for large urban school districts but 15 percent for charters. In districts with less than 100 African-American students, the numbers were even worse: 22 percent dropped out and 18 percent left. The study compared districts in Austin, Houston and Dallas from 1998 to 2008. (Austin Chronicle, April 27)

Without jobs to offer, who needs educated students?

There is no lack of money that could be used for education. Last year's state budget for Pennsylvania slashed nearly \$1 billion in public education funding yet approved spending \$600 million to construct new prisons. The state's total spending for prisons is over \$2.1 billion. The state's annual education subsidy for Philadelphia averages \$6,953 per student, while it spends more than \$32,000 to incarcerate each prisoner.

Taxpayers in Philadelphia will pay \$476.2 million in 2012 alone for the cost of U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, enough to finance the salaries of 7,029 elementary teachers for a year.

There has been plenty of money to bail out the banks and lending institutions. If you add up what the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank spent to bail out banks here and in Europe and Japan, the total poured into the world capitalist financial system was close to \$20 trillion. That's \$20,000,000,000,000.

In the book, “Capitalism at a Dead End,” Fred Goldstein notes: “The system of capitalism is facing a crisis unlike any it's experienced before. This is not simply a cyclical problem of overproduction that will go away in a few years, but a systemic problem aggravated by over 30 years of globalization and growing global unemployment.”

Youth have been hit the hardest. At the end of 2009, globally there were 81 million unemployed youth ages 15 to 24. In the U.S., official youth unemployment is 20 percent, but in most urban areas it's 50 percent or higher.

The new generation of workers coming into the workforce is largely shut out, whether or not these workers have obtained higher degrees of education. With capitalism needing fewer workers to produce more and more goods and services in less and less time, the need for an educated workforce diminishes.

A new report by the Associated Press found that more than 53.6 percent of the people under 25 having a bachelor's degree were either out of work or doing jobs that need only a high school diploma or less. (FightBack!News, April 28)

High tech has driven down the level of skills required for many jobs in modern industry today. Most jobs under 21st-century capitalism are low or medium level and require little or no formal education above middle or high school. Rather than

*Continued on page 11*

# Pennsylvania's war on the poor

By Betsey Piette  
Philadelphia

Around 200 protesters condemning draconian cuts in Pennsylvania's welfare funding gathered outside the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia on April 26, as Pennsylvania Secretary of Public Welfare Gary Alexander addressed a United Way forum inside. The cuts will take effect May 1. Welfare advocates who attempted to crash the party were physically removed by building security, further fueling the anger of those targeted by the cuts.

In his 2012-2013 budget, Gov. Tom Corbett combined the funding of seven programs that serve people most in need into a single block grant fund and implemented a 20 percent across-the-board cut to these funding streams. The funds include Medical Assistance Outpatient, Behavioral Health Services, Mental Health Services, Intellectual Disability Community Base Program, County Child Welfare, Human Services Development Fund and Homeless Assistance.

In addition Corbett proposed eliminating the General Assistance program, which provides an average monthly benefit of \$205 per recipient. The Pennsylvania State Legislature also slashed funding for the State Food Purchase Program, which provides money to organizations that stock food pantries.

On May 1, Pennsylvania will implement asset testing for food stamp recipients. Families with \$5,500 or more in assets, or \$9,000 or more for households with seniors or disabled individuals, will be disqualified from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Critics noted that this new plan dissuades poor people from saving money. Casey Morgan, executive director of the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, stated, “Families need to save money to get off government assistance and achieve self-sufficiency. So it's not only inhumane, but counterproductive to force people to drain their savings before they can get any help.” Morgan noted that one visit to the emergency room could easily wipe out a low-income fam-

ily's savings. (CityPaper.net, Jan. 10)

The cuts in funding for food stamp programs not only hurt recipients; they also hurt the general economy. The food stamp program is actually a major economic stimulus. Every dollar of public funds spent on food stamps increases the gross domestic product by \$1.73.

The number of families relying on food stamps and food pantries has nearly doubled over the last few years. More than 400,000 Philadelphians now rely on food pantries. Around 40 percent of them are children. One in three people in Philadelphia relies on food stamps.

The cuts in direct assistance follow earlier cuts in medical assistance for poor and working-class families. Since August 2011, the Corbett administration has cut off more than 150,000 people, including 43,000 children, from medical assistance.

In fact, the demand for all the programs threatened by Corbett's cuts is at an all-time high and increasing daily, as the promised “economic recovery” fails to materialize for anyone but Wall Street's greedy 1%. □



# People occupy home, open battle against banks

**By Dante Strobino**  
**Raleigh, N.C.**

The people's movement has occupied its first home here in North Carolina. This is the home state of Charlotte, "Wall Street of the South," where more financial capital is concentrated than in any other U.S. city but New York. The occupation challenged Wells Fargo's unjust foreclosures of millions of families in the last few years.

On April 9, people occupied the Shelton family home at 2633 Pebble Ridge Rd. in southeast Raleigh. It had been taken over by Wells Fargo due to a racist, predatory, subprime, adjustable-rate loan. Home owner Nikki Shelton, whose family lost the home to foreclosure in late 2010, received notice in March that any belongings left in the house had to be collected before April 8.

Shelton reached out for support to her neighbor, Marcella Robinson, a leader in the fight against unjust foreclosures. Nearly a dozen homes on her block in the predominantly Black community of Raleigh are also facing foreclosure, and the families have been meeting to develop a strategy to fight back, organized by MortgageFraud, N.C.

Supported by Occupy Raleigh, Occupy Greensboro, Save Our Homes, Raleigh-Durham FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) and others, the family agreed to call for an occupation to reclaim their home. This step drew immediate support. The occupiers say they have uncovered evidence of robo-signing, an illegal practice where banks sign off to transfer a mortgage, as part of a bundle, to sell to another bank without permission from the homeowner.

Shelton told Workers World that her interest rates had shot up from 7.5 percent to 11.2 percent, which made her mortgage payment unaffordable. The family fell behind a few payments at the end of 2007 when Shelton's husband was in a head-on



car collision that forced him out of work for 18 months. The banks refused to help her with a loan modification, even though federal legislation should have covered her.

On April 9, soon after the media left the home occupation in the early afternoon, a large squadron of armored police officers stormed into the house, busted the door down and arrested five occupiers who had refused to leave. Later that evening, two more were arrested after they showed up in solidarity.

“Housing should be a basic human right,” FIST member Ben Carroll told WW. “We are going to continue to expose the racist, predatory nature of these banks that turn to the cops to throw people out of their homes, while getting bailed out by the government and making record profits.”

On April 13, a few days after the protest, Wells Fargo reported record profits of more than \$4 billion in the previous quarter.

## NORTH CAROLINA

This home occupation is part of a major, nationwide 99% spring offensive in which Occupy movements are linking up with labor, community, civil rights, environmental and student groups around the country to protest at several major banks and corporate shareholder meetings.

In North Carolina, the recently formed N.C. Coalition Against Corporate Power is organizing a major protest, including civil disobedience, on May 9 at the Bank of America shareholders' meeting in Charlotte. This city is also home to the Wachovia skyscraper, which became Wells Fargo's eastern headquarters after it acquired the Wachovia bank in 2008.

Demonstrators on May 9 will demand a moratorium on home foreclosures and an end to financing mountain-top removal, private prisons and right-wing politicians.

Activists will also demand an end to the attack on public workers — last year 30,000 public workers were laid off here — by declaring a moratorium on state and local government debt and an end to student debt and financing of the war machine.

In September, Charlotte will host the Democratic National Convention. Organizations plan major demonstrations, including a March on Wall Street South and a People's Tribunal on the Banks to challenge the banks for the damage and destruction they have inflicted on millions of workers and families across the world.

Organizers say that only a fighting, militant, mass movement in the streets and in the workplaces will stop the devastation caused by the major banks and corporations. □

# Chicano activist's supporters mobilize for May 15 trial

**By John Catalinotto**

Longtime Los Angeles Chicano activist and organizer Carlos Montes will go on trial May 15 on trumped-up charges that amount to political persecution. Montes' supporters are mobilizing for his legal and popular defense.

Superior Court Judge George Lomeli ordered Montes' trial at an April 26 hearing, after 40 of the defendant's supporters rallied outside the courthouse in the rain. The trial will start at 8 a.m. at the Criminal Courts Building, 13th floor, Department 100 at 210 West Temple Ave. in Los Angeles.

According to his defense committee, “Montes was singled out for prosecution because of his activism. He is being targeted as part of larger proceedings against anti-war and international solidarity activists.” (stopfbi.net, April 27)

The charges stem from a 42-year-old legal case, the outcome of which is under dispute. Montes' lawyers have argued that the indictment was a clear example of selective prosecution. At a prior hearing, two of the six charges against Montes were dropped. His upcoming trial will take up the other four felony charges, dealing with

the purchase of a gun in 2009.

A founding member of the Southern California Immigration Coalition, Montes is also active in support of public education in East L.A. Like other political activists whose homes were raided in September 2010 by the FBI, Montes helped organize protests against the 2008 Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minn.

“On May 17, 2011, at 5 a.m., the FBI, along with the L.A. Sheriff’s SWAT team, carrying automatic weapons, busted down Montes’ door and raided his home, seizing his computer, cell phones, and files documenting decades of political work. Montes was arrested and released on bail the next morning.” (stopfbi.net, April 27)

John Parker, West Coast regional coordinator of the International Action Center, who was at the April 26 rally, told Workers World, "We recognize that the case against Montes is political persecution. It is an attack targeting Montes but aimed at intimidating the entire progressive movement. And that makes it all the more imperative that the entire movement come out to support Montes at his trial."

For more information on the case, including how to make financial contributions, see [stopfbi.net](http://stopfbi.net). □

# Coke meeting fizzles



The Campaign to Stop Killer Coke partnered with Occupy Atlanta, the International Action Center and other organizations to stage a two-prong action at the annual Coca-Cola stockholders' meeting, held at the Cobb Galleria in suburban Atlanta on April 25.

CEO Muhtar Kent, whose pay tops almost \$30 million a year, presided over a tightly run program, complete with flashy videos; a recorded message from billionaire Warren Buffet, who controls over 200 million shares of Coke stock; and a guest appearance by hip-hop artist Will.i.am of the Black-Eyed Peas.

Despite extremely tight security, dozens of voices rang out from the audience declaring, "You lie," after Kent made mul-

multiple falsehoods and misrepresentations. He denied any and all charges of racist labor practices at New York plants, involvement with union repression and killings in Colombia, contributing to environmental degradation and pollution, and promoting sugar-laden beverages to children. Most of the limited questions allowed during the meeting challenged a wide range of Coca-Cola policies and practices.

Following the stockholders' meeting, a protest was held outside the international headquarters of Coca-Cola. Demonstrators chanted, "Unthinkable! Undrinkable! Boycott Coke!"

For more information, go to [killercoke.org](http://killercoke.org).

— Report by Dianne Mathiowetz



# ACT UP occupies Wall Street

By **Gerry Scoppettuolo**  
New York

Up to 1,500 people with HIV/AIDS and other activists marched on Wall Street on April 25. With more than 8,000 people still being infected every day worldwide and no cure in sight, the crowd confronted the cornerstone of capitalist profit with one demand: "Make the banks pay!"

Chanting "People with AIDS under attack, what do we do? ACT UP, fight back," the demonstrators moved down Broadway from City Hall and stopped in front of the city's Human Resources Administration to protest proposed mandatory drug testing and work requirements which would drastically reduce the number of people eligible for government HIV/AIDS services in New York. A total of 19 people were arrested at civil disobedience actions on Wall Street and Broadway organized by ACT UP and Housing Works.

Permanent, affordable housing has emerged as a critical need for people with HIV/AIDS who must survive on paltry Social Security checks, at the same time food stamps and other necessities of life are being cut back. According to the Boston Housing Authority, the minimum waiting period for such housing in Boston is five years. As one man living with AIDS told *Workers World*, "I don't think I have five years!"

A chief demand of ACT UP New York is a financial transaction tax on Wall Street speculative purchases. It is hoped this would provide billions of dollars for needed HIV services. "All of our needs are not being met," declared Marcus Paul, an early founder of ACT UP in 1987. "We need this Robin Hood Tax."

In addition to ACT UP New York, Occupy Wall Street and Housing Works, support for the demonstration came from ACT UP contingents from Philadelphia, Health GAP, the National Nurses Union, Harlem United, the East Side Harm Reduction Coalition, the HIV Prevention Justice Alliance, Queers Rising and Stonewall Warriors/Boston. Most important for the future, newly revived ACT UP chapters from Boston, Rhode Island and Maryland organized buses to the demonstration.

The organizers focused attention on worldwide as well as U.S. issues. According to the World Health Organization, most of the 33 million people worldwide known to be infected cannot afford life-saving HIV medications. Here in the U.S. over 3,400 people with HIV/AIDS have been placed on waiting lists due to the col-

lapse of the subsidized AIDS Drug Assistance Program in many states.

In several states, people who have HIV/AIDS but are deemed "too healthy" because of their T-cell count can no longer have access to anti-retrovirals or other needed medications. This privation exists even though the eight leading manufacturers of HIV medicines and other drugs netted more than \$263 billion between 2006 and 2010. (annual reports of Merck, GSK, Roche and five other pharmaceutical companies)

Despite their daily struggle to stay alive, people living with HIV/AIDS again showed on April 25 that they will fight back and not rest until those who profit from their illness are made to return the great wealth they have taken from the workers to the masses who desperately need health care.

*Scoppettuolo, co-founder of ACT UP/Nashville 1988-1992, can be reached at gerryred@yahoo.com.*



WW PHOTO: GERRY SCOPPETTUOLO

HIV/AIDS spreads as services are cut.

## '99% Spring'

# Thousands in Detroit protest GE

By **Martha Grevatt**

The 99% Spring, one of many offshoots of the Occupy Wall Street movement, issued a call in February for thousands of activists to come to Detroit for April 25. The target was General Electric, whose annual shareholders meeting was scheduled to open that day at the Renaissance Center, General Motors' world headquarters.

Thousands came to the protest from the Detroit area and from across the Midwest, with a few traveling from Boston and other faraway cities. The largest number of protesters was brought in by the Service Employees International Union and the SEIU-affiliated Good Jobs Now coalition. A few dozen were able to enter the meeting, using shareholder proxies provided by the union, and succeeded in disrupting the speech of GE CEO Jeffrey Immelt before being escorted outside.

Organizers labeled GE "the poster child for corporate tax dodging," charging that "not only did GE pay nothing in taxes,

they received a tax refund totaling \$4.7 billion over three years." Moreover, GE has cut tens of thousands of jobs in the same three-year period. The company's financial arm, GE Money Bank, is even being investigated by the FBI and the Department of Justice for fraudulent practices involving subprime mortgages.

CEO Immelt, a Republican, is, nevertheless, a chief economic advisor to President Barack Obama. This may be why some unions sent only token delegations to the protest or maintained a low profile.

The multinational group outside the Renaissance Center maintained a noisy presence for hours. Large delegations of African-American youth from Wisconsin, Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania led the crowd in chanting the popular "We are the 99%!" and "This is what democracy looks like!" Before dispersing, the crowd took to the streets, occupying all six lanes of Jefferson Avenue — a major thoroughfare in downtown Detroit — and was able to march several blocks. □



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

Youth chant, 'We are the 99%'

# NYC women's march

Young women turned out in droves for the Unite Against the War on Women march and rally on April 28 in New York. Gathering at the site of the Triangle Shirtwaist factory, where 146 mostly young immigrant women died in a disastrous fire in 1911, they joined veterans of the movement for reproductive justice, the Equal Rights Amendment and a multinational contingent from National Advocates for Pregnant Women.

A May Day leaflet handed out by the International Action Center got a great response, with at least three-quarters of the crowd of several hundred saying they planned to attend. One of the signs of the Women's Fightback Network attracted attention: demanding justice for Marissa Alexander, the young African-American mother of three who defended herself in her own home against an abusive husband and now faces a possible 20-year prison sentence in "Stand Your Ground" Florida. Copies of the May 3 issue of *Workers World* were handed out with an article



WW PHOTO: BRENDA RYAN

detailing the racist, sexist double standard applied in this case by State Attorney Angela Corey, who is special prosecutor in the Trayvon Martin murder case.

Desiree Jordan is seen here (wearing the hat) leading the march to Foley Square, where a rally was held. Along with unitewomen.org co-founder Karen Teagarden, Jordan organized the national day of protest primarily via social media over the last 10 weeks.

— Report by Sue Davis

# NYC restaurant workers say 'Exploitation, ain't no way!'

A strong multinational picket line was held at the entrance of Capital Grille restaurant on East 42nd Street in New York on April 24. A flier handed to Manhattan shoppers during the event stated, "Take wage theft and discrimination off the Capital Grille menu!"

A class-action lawsuit was filed in 2012 against Darden Restaurants, Capital Grille's owner, to contest illegal labor practices at the company's restaurants in New York, Los Angeles, Miami and Washington, D.C. Darden is the largest full-service casual dining company in the world.

Organized by Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York, protesters denounced the racial discrimination, poverty wages, no sick leave and an abusive working environment at the hands of Darden bosses. Capital Grille's employees include members of ROC-NY.



The growing support for the workers' "workplace justice campaign" was visible, with students, union members and representatives of the May 1st Coalition for Worker and Immigrant Rights and Occupy Wall Street walking the picket line. These allies are determined to build support until all restaurant workers have rights and justice. Workers of the world, unite!

— Story & photo by Anne Pruden



SAN DIEGO

# ‘Occupy’ reaches out to City Heights

By Carl Muhammad  
San Diego

Activists set up yet another Occupy camp in San Diego to expose this so-called tourist city’s long and bloody history of police brutality and to reach the city’s poorest people. They chose the City Heights Performance Annex because of its location: It sits across the street from the San Diego Police Department Mid-City Division.

OCH began the occupation April 21 with an afternoon of political speakers, signs and banners with messages like “Sí, se puede” (Yes, we can) and “Justice 4 Anastacio Rojas.” Rojas is a Mexican immigrant who was beaten and tasered to death while in handcuffs by the Border Patrol.

Political rap and hip-hop music kept the crowd energized, while organizers served food and sponsors interacted with community members attending the event. OCH joined several Occupy groups already existing within city limits.

Rally denounces repression

City Heights is a poor, predominantly Latinos/as community with a large population of Mexican immigrants. Latino/as make up 65 percent of its population, while African Americans are the second-largest group at 19 percent. City Heights is also home to a large community of African immigrants. Median household



This banner faced the local police station.

PHOTO: BEN STOSSELL

income in 2005 was \$19,323, only one-third the median for all of San Diego.

One highlight of the afternoon was the return of Cherry Mason, the courageous fighter and mother of Sonserra Holloway, a pregnant Black woman slaughtered in 1999 by the Border Patrol in City Heights.

Another was this banner: “Si por que soy Mexicano dicen que soy ‘ilegal,’ revisa la historia real, pues estoy en mi tierra NATAL!” (If they say I’m illegal because I’m Mexican, they’re changing history, because I’m in my HOMELAND.)

Sponsors of the occupation and rally included Activist San Diego, Occupy San Diego, San Diego Committee Against Police Brutality, and other activists and community organizers.

Gloria Verdieu, from the Coalition to

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, gave an update on the struggle for his freedom. Poet Sylvia Telafaro stunned and inspired the crowd with a fiery poem about political organizing.

Organizer Pat Herron read a message

about the city of San Diego’s assault on the World Beat Center and the Centro Cultural de la Raza. The two centers are former water towers in Balboa Park that have been converted into cultural, political and social hubs for all San Diegans, but in particular for people of African and Latino/a descent.

Many within Occupy San Diego, including some who are residents of City Heights, took this action to bring the Occupy movement to a Latino/a, Black, poor, working-class community. They plan to continue the occupation, holding regular general assembly meetings at the Annex and political events to address social justice issues relevant to the community.

Muhammad spoke at the April 21 rally for the Committee Against Police Brutality and raised the need for a community-elected and controlled police review board in San Diego. □

## D.C. protest demands: Release Mumia Abu-Jamal



Continued from page 1

words were a call to action, reminding us of the importance of this moment, of this movement. “Pay attention to the quality of your consciousness, not just its quantity. We live in a country that always tries

to say more is better. ... If you happen to come here today, the quality of yourself is making a large statement to the world.”

Mumia’s inspiring message

The energy stayed magnetic and consis-

## Artists honor Betty Fry, Mumia



PHOTO: SOLOMON

In honor of April National Poetry Month, Space Bar “4th Thursday Open-mike Jihmye” presented tributes to the late, long-time activist Betty Fry and to political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal. April 26 was an evening of poetry, music and spoken word presented by poets, visual artists, activists and students. People in the audience enjoyed listening to the messages. For the last three years Abu-Jamal’s birthday has been celebrated at Space Bar. He turned 58 on April 24. Fry, a long-time supporter of the Cuban revolution, died on March 26. Read her obituary at [www.workers.org](http://www.workers.org).

Visual artist Lanetta Wilkes read Alice Walker’s poem for Mumia called “Occupy Mumia’s Cell.” African-American writer and artist Sylvia read a beautiful poem she wrote called “Betty-Champion of Justice.”

After featured poet Liz Huerta spoke, Eusi Kwyana spoke words of encouragement to those involved in the struggle to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier, the Cuban 5 and all political prisoners. Students from Palomar College Poetry Group recited spoken word.

Open mike host Jim Moreno cleared the stage for all who wanted to be part of a group picture, which has become a tradition for Space Bar. Every year a group picture has been taken on the stage or in

Supporters hold Mumia Abu-Jamal’s books, April 26.

front of the artwork of the late great visionary artist and activist Jihmye Collins.

This year each person was handed one of Abu-Jamal’s books to hold while the photo was taken. Everyone was then invited to sign a card that read “Lots of people are thinking of you.” Most people wrote individual messages such as “Happy Birthday” and “Thank you, Mumia.”

The card along with the pictures are being sent to him.

— Report by Gloria Verdieu

## Activists & Librotraficantes honor Mumia

By Gloria Rubac  
Houston

Houston activists, Librotraficantes, poets and writers gathered to celebrate and have a Banned Book Reading on April 24 in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal’s 58th birthday. They read works from Mumia as well as Jimmy Santiago Baca and Alice Walker. They sang “Happy Birthday” twice, including the Stevie Wonder version, and chanted “Free Mumia now!” They signed a huge birthday card for Mumia as they ate cake and ice cream and nachos with jalapenos.

Mumia’s book “Live From Death Row” was banned in Arizona along with almost 100 books written primarily by Chicano/a authors. Underground libraries were set up by the Librotraficantes in Houston and San Antonio, Texas; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Tucson, Ariz., which hold the books banned by the racist school board in Tucson. Brother Sensei, a former Houston



WW PHOTO: GLORIA RUBAC

Black Panther, peace activist Bart Boyce, and former SNCC Civil Rights activist and now Workers World Party activist Joanne Gavin read several selections from Mumia’s work.

Filmmaker and Librotraficante Gabriel Carmona read a poem written while banned-in-Arizona author Jimmy Santiago Baca was in prison. Sister Anelle Williams, who plays Mumia’s voice via Prison Radio every Sunday night on her Pacifica radio show “Sister Space,” read a poem

Alice Walker wrote to honor Mumia after he was released from death row in January.

Local poet Deniz Lopez — aka “dee!colonize” — read two of her original poems and wrote a piece entitled “Feliz Birthday Mumia Abu-Jamal” on her blog the next day: “The energy was love and between the pictures, nachos, and cake, I saw the resilience that emanates from Mumia gleaming from the eyes of everyone present. We will never stop fighting for him. Because we love our brother.” □



# RACIST ATROCITIES & CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

By Larry Hales

It took a month and a half after George Zimmerman executed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin before an arrest was made. Though special prosecutor Angela Corey asserts that an investigation had been ongoing, all the evidence and statements made by the police chief and others involved with the case make it very clear that, had it not been for a massive outpouring, especially from the Black community, George Zimmerman would still be walking free.

It was fear of a rebellion that led to the state responding and to Zimmerman's arrest. And not to be forgotten or glossed over were the resilience and determination of Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin to win some justice for their son.

It was definitely a surprise, but further injury, that George Zimmerman was released on bail on April 23 after a judge set

the bond at \$150,000, which meant his family only needed to lay out 10 percent, or \$15,000.

With the recent discovery that the Zimmermans had raised more than \$200,000 via the Internet, the parents of young Trayvon, their lawyer and the Black community are calling foul. They are demanding a review of the bail decision, especially in light of the fact that Zimmerman's family failed to disclose the amount earlier and claimed not to have enough money to pay for the higher bail of \$1 million that had been sought after it was determined that the judge would set bail.

There is speculation that some of the same wealthy right-wingers who supported the "Stand Your Ground" law in Florida, such as the American Legislative Exchange Council and the owners of Koch Industries, may be making donations.

## COMMENTARY

Whether this is fact or merely speculation, \$200,000-plus is a hefty sum. That it was not disclosed and that bond was set relatively low, either because the Zimmerman family and his lawyer omitted giving information or were deliberately misleading, should lead to a rearrest. This is what Trayvon Martin's family is calling for.

### More cases of police violence and racist murders

As tragic as was the killing of Martin, the tremendous movement that rose up in response has brought to the fore more cases of police violence and racist killings.

Most notable is the case of two white supremacists who deliberately went into North Tulsa, Okla., early in April to terrorize Black people. They killed three Black men, an act that brought to mind the massacre of hundreds of Black people in the Greenwood section of Tulsa in 1921.

Another killing by a suspected white supremacist occurred in North Carolina months before Trayvon Martin's death and is just now coming to light. Jasmine Thar, 16, her godmother and a friend were preparing to go Christmas shopping when they were struck by a bullet from a

Remington rifle. Thar died as her 15-year-old brother was trying to stop the bleeding. The shooter claims an accidental discharge of his gun, but was found to have not only a Confederate flag but also Nazi memorabilia. No charges were filed.

There were also the police killings in March of Kendrec McDade, 19, in Pasadena, Calif., and Dane Scott, 18, in Del City, Okla. Others that happened a few years ago are now gaining more attention, like the 2010 killing of Anastasio Hernandez-Rojas, 32. A video has emerged of Border Patrol agents beating and tasing him to death.

The case that not only shows the brutality of the police but illustrates even further the systemic oppression and repression of people of color is the handcuffing of 6-year-old Salecia Johnson by police. Conventional wisdom would lead one to believe that even the most hardened of racists would show restraint in the face of a child, but history dispels such a notion. In fact, it is rife with the youngest and most innocent being brutalized just as viciously.

Salecia Johnson, although only 6, will

*Continued on page 11*

# al NOW!



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE



WW PHOTO: ABAYOMI AZIKIWE

tent with spoken word, dancing and music. Performances by Rebel Diaz, Jaziri X and M1 from Dead Prez kept the people, young and old, engaged throughout the day. Longtime activist Danny Glover called in expressing his words of support, and a very special call from Pennsylvania's Mahanoy Correctional Facility was projected over the loudspeakers allowing the people to hear Mumia Abu-Jamal live.

"For many years I actually forgot my birthday and would only be reminded if my mother, wife, children or other family would send me a card. That's because on death row, every day is like every other day. And a day alive is the only day you know you are not dead."

Abu-Jamal encouraged the demonstrators to pay attention to California and the opportunity it has to end the death penalty there and remove over 684 people from death row, the largest death row in America, stating, "This would be a powerful symbol for the abolitionist movement."

The final speaker of the program was Pam Africa, who, with her vibrant and contagious demeanor, ignited the people to begin a march to the White House, calling for the end of mass incarceration, the release of all political prisoners, and the demand for jobs, education, health care and not jails!

At the White House, over two dozen demonstrators held a sit-in and refused

to leave when police came to disperse them. Those individuals, including several elderly women and a number of high school students, were arrested. Jail solidarity was arranged and a festive crowd of loved ones and supporters were present late into the night to greet them when they were released.

"The spirit of a movement is brewing, and now is the time for us to either answer the call to serve or sit back and exist in complicity. I chose to act," said D.C. youth organizer Chioma Adaora.

The decision to hold the demonstration on a weekday was not missed by several organizers. "There is a need to show this country that enough is enough. We will sacrifice for the greater good, even if that means taking a day off from work in the midst of a potential double dip recession," said Occupy DC organizer Damon Bascom.

Actions took place all over the U.S. and the world in honor of Abu-Jamal's birthday, including the cities of Oakland, Houston, San Diego, London, Mexico City and Berlin. There was also a Wells Fargo protest on April 24 in San Francisco calling attention not only to the home foreclosure crisis, but also highlighting Wells Fargo's investment in private prisons.

For more information about future actions and coverage of the event, visit [www.occupythejusticedepartment.com](http://www.occupythejusticedepartment.com). □

## Week of events to free the MOVE 9

By Iresha Picot  
Philadelphia

Imagine you are sleeping in your bed when hundreds of police suddenly attack you and your family in your home. When you refuse to come out, they blast water hoses and pump thousands of bullets into your house. They bulldoze your home, with you and your family sequestered in the basement.

This is what happened to the MOVE family in the Powelton Village section of Philadelphia in August 1978.

Inadvertently, one of those shots fired by police fatally killed Officer James Ramp, yet nine MOVE members were sentenced to 30 to 100 years for the killing. Now imagine almost 34 years later, you are still in prison serving this time. This is the case of the MOVE 9.

After serving their full minimum sentence of 30 years, the MOVE 9 have continually been denied parole. They have been before the parole board unsuccessfully three times since 2008.

On May 13, 1985, the police again attacked a MOVE family home, this time on Osage Avenue in West Philadelphia. They dropped a military style C-4 bomb that destroyed the surrounding Black community and killed 11 MOVE people, including children.

On the cusp of the 27th anniversary of this attack, the support group "Friends and Family of the MOVE 9," along with the International Action Center, is organizing a week of events to bring awareness to the MOVE 9 case.

On May 8, the film "MOVE: A Documentary" will be shown at Calvary Church at 48th Street and Baltimore Avenue, starting at 7 p.m. A panel will feature Temple University Professor Linn Washington; Theresa Shoatz, daughter of political prisoner Russell Maroon Shoatz; and Betsey Piette from the IAC.

On May 9, starting at 6 p.m. at A-Space, 4722 Baltimore Ave., there will be a "write-in" to compose letters to state of-



May 13, 1985, police bombed the MOVE home.

ficials and the parole board. On May 10, the panel "Who Are the MOVE 9?" will feature Dr. Anthony Monteiro, Pam Africa and MOVE supporters Abdul John and Maiga Milbourne, following a screening of the film "MOVE: Confrontation in Philadelphia."

A teach-in about former Philadelphia Mayor and Police Commissioner Frank Rizzo led by attorney and activist Michael Coard will take place May 11 at Black and Nobel bookstore at 1411 West Erie Ave. The week ends with an organizers' meeting May 12, led by Ramona Africa and members of the MOVE organization, at Abiding Truth Ministries at 846 S. 57th St. from 12 to 3 p.m.

Thirty-four years is too long for innocent men and women to be in prison. We must keep the MOVE 9's case at the forefront of our fight for justice — until they are free. Let their mere presence behind enemy walls stir our continued fight for their release from a racist and unjust penal system, so threatened by letting the MOVE 9 free that it is hell-bent on keeping them confined.

The whole of the community has to be involved in bringing the MOVE 9 home. As the revolutionary Che Guevara profoundly stated, "Words are beautiful, but action is supreme." Ona MOVE!

For more information on these events, visit the [MOVE9parole.blogspot.com](http://MOVE9parole.blogspot.com) or email [Onamovellja@aol.com](mailto:Onamovellja@aol.com). □



# Mexican left groups back AMLO presidential bid

By Berta Joubert-Ceci

An International Seminar that the Mexican Labor Party holds each year under the theme “Parties and a New Society” provides the opportunity for the parties and organizations of the many countries that attend to thoroughly discuss various analyses of the current financial and economic crisis and its impact on these countries. The recent 16th Seminar held in March in the Federal District also provided an opportunity to examine in more detail Mexico’s current critical situation.

Andrés Manuel López Obrador, better known as AMLO, the candidate of the left-wing electoral front for the presidency in the coming elections in July, was a special guest at the seminar the day following his official proclamation.

Because of the great interest within the progressive movement in the United States, which includes millions of Mexican immigrant workers, this article will focus on the platform of AMLO and the organizations allied with his campaign.

### AMLO’s political platform

Sen. Alberto Anaya, leader of the Labor Party (PT), introduced López Obrador as the sole candidate of the Mexican left and the official candidate of the PT.

AMLO addressed the seminar, giving a brief summary of the current conditions in the country. He stressed that “there are many problems, much poverty, unemployment, insecurity, violence, pain and suffering among the majority of the people caused by the lack of development and the prevailing corruption.” What makes these elections “transcendental” is that of the four candidates running, there are “only two projects. Two men and a woman represent more of the same — the continuity of the regime and the corruption, injustice and privileges. We represent the option of a true change, a transformation at all levels of public life.”

The proposal for this transformation, which is the basis of his election campaign, focuses on three aspects, which AMLO calls “Honesty, Justice and Love.”

• **HONESTY** — “Because nothing has damaged Mexico more than dishonesty, the leading cause of social and economic inequality and the cause of the current

national tragedy, as corruption remains a big problem.” AMLO proposes an agenda of austerity contrary to the current one: “The national budget is 3.7 trillion pesos [about 284 billion U.S. dollars], but most stays [within the administration]. ... They spend 61 percent of the budget on ‘everyday expenditure,’ very high salaries for public officials.” AMLO stressed, “There can be no rich government with poor people.”

• **JUSTICE** — “We suffer from a monstrous economic and social inequality,” said AMLO. “Since they started to practice the so-called neoliberal policy, money has been accumulated in few hands like never before. However, there has been no development; not even in this period has there been economic growth. In 21 years, the national economy has grown at an average annual rate of 2.3 percent, and if we discount the increase in population, the result is zero growth. And if there is no growth, there are no jobs, and if there are no jobs there is no well-being, and if there is no well-being, there can be no peace and social tranquillity.

“In the last 15 years, only 500,000 jobs have been generated annually and we need 1.2 million. This means that 700,000 Mexicans every year have only three alternatives: [one is] going to find a life on the other side of the border, the USA; this turned our country into the one that exports more labor abroad than any other country in the world.”

On the economic recovery, he spoke of Mexico’s “own model” where there will be no more privatizations. “In practical terms,” said AMLO, “the state was privatized, and in 29 years they have passed reforms to the constitution and laws to benefit those who are proponents of this model. They adjusted the legal framework of everything regarding mining since the government of Salinas [de Gortari] and they began to hand over concessions for mining in the country. Currently, they have made concessions of 50 million hectares of territory [193,000 square miles]. Our country has 200 million hectares. In 20 years they have given away 25 percent of the national territory. They take the gold, silver, copper and pay no taxes on the extraction of minerals. Then, we will solve this issue.”

Regarding the lack of tax payments by large corporations, he said that “we will review fiscal policy so that equal taxes are paid.”

“We are for that, but also the state should rescue those who are currently facing extreme poverty. We propose two things: to revive the economy in order to produce jobs but also that the state fulfills its social responsibility. We propose a social development project to bring 15 million Mexicans out of extreme poverty. Nobody in this country will suffer from hunger or malnutrition.”

About the violence in the country, AMLO said that “the problem of insecurity and violence cannot be solved with coercive measures. If we create an atmosphere of progress and justice, if we look at young people, to whom the doors have been closed and who cannot have jobs or education, if we go door to door incorporating young people into work and study, we will be able to calm the country. Of the 60,000 murders that have occurred in recent years, most were young people. So we have to address the causes. And, of course, not having corruption will help, and also if there is an efficient government, to ensure coordination, where the president takes care of these issues on a daily basis. And we should have a good national police, so that the army is gradually removed from the streets.”

• **LOVE** — A Loving Republic, says AMLO, refers to the need to strengthen the country’s moral, spiritual and cultural values.

### Role of mass political organization

While the electoral front that propels López Obrador is composed of the Democratic Revolution Party (PRD), the PT and the Citizens Movement, there are other organizations in Mexico that support him but act independently. The most important is the People’s and Workers’ Political Organization (OPT), which consists of a large segment of the Mexican progressive movement, particularly the courageous Mexican Union of Electricians (SME).

The OPT was formed in 2011 to create a political instrument for the liberation of the workers and the people. Its slogan is “For national liberation and social emancipation.”

Its website optmex.org reads, “We are leaders and activists of the working class, of Indigenous and peasant communities, students’ and women’s collectives, religious groups, civil society organizations, sexual minorities and revolutionary organizations of the Mexican left, among others, which aspire to build a new political leadership.

“The OPT is a national partisan organization, independent, inclusive and not-for-profit; an instrument of social, civil and political movements and of the Indigenous communities to challenge the government and the power of the capitalist Mexican oligarchy and imperialism.”

The position of the OPT on the electoral situation in 2012 is as follows: “Currently, the legal or political conditions for the Native peoples, the working class and the civil and social movements do not exist to confront the government directly. The monopoly of the electoral processes exerted by the mass media, the oligarchic parties and the liberal-progressive and social-democratic political currents preclude the participation of independent coalitions led by popular subjects. Such circumstances require the construction of an alliance with the liberal-progressives and social democrats who share the presidential candidacy of Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his political movement.

“We will participate in a decisive manner because we understand that in 2012 there is a danger that neoliberalism wins legitimacy through the elections and then unleashes an offensive even more violent and effective against us; that the privatization of oil is carried out as well as that of all the riches of the nation that have so far escaped their grasp, thanks to the constant and combative popular mobilizations.”

On April 9, the OPT formed the “Citizen Structure to support the candidacy of AMLO and for an alternative project for the nation.” Its position is that “the only possibility in the electoral arena that can allow the political and revolutionary left to promote a social project is the candidacy of Andrés Manuel López Obrador for the Presidency of the Republic, so it is necessary at this stage to group all the forces around this nomination.”

*Joubert-Ceci attended the International Seminar in Mexico City.*

# Why is Cuba’s May Day different?

By Ildefonso Gustavo Díaz Sandoval  
Artemisia, Cuba.

Why are May Day marches in Cuba different from May Day marches in most of the rest of the world?

Since the International Socialist Congress in 1889 decided to consider May 1 the international day of struggle, this day — inspired by the struggle in the U.S. for the eight-hour day — has become the day of international solidarity for the working class of the world.

In many countries around the world the workers will be on strike, protesting and fighting for their legitimate rights. In some countries these demonstrating workers will protest against their governments and the local rich, and they will confront the police and the power of the state.

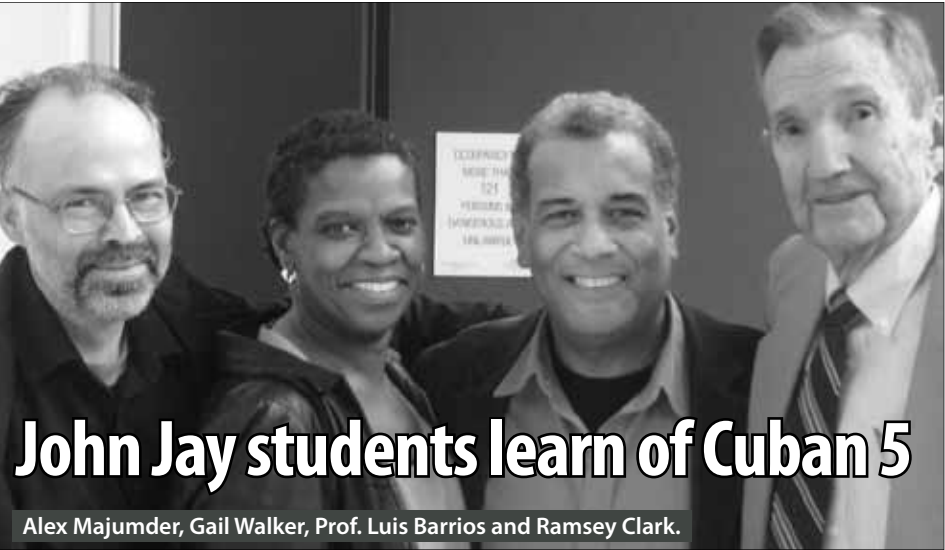
In Cuba, just as in every year since the 1959 revolution, hundreds of thousands of workers and youth will be marching side by side with their political leaders in every province and municipality. They will march to firmly maintain the socialist

ideas and to support the positions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party and the main goals of its First Conference.

If you visit Cuba at this time, you will see that in every workplace the workers are commemorating International Workers Day by being more efficient and having better economic results. This year the Cuban workers will demonstrate once more the strength of a united people.

Messages such as “Long live May Day!” “Long live the working class!” “Long live the Cuban Revolution!” “Long live Socialism!” “The people united will never be defeated!” and “Freedom for the Cuban Five!” will be heard in every march along the island, and the marches will be massive, colorful and enthusiastic.

The workers will pay tribute to René Ramos Latour, Agapito Figueroa Barreiras, Mario Muñoz Monroy, Lázaro Peña, Jesús Menéndez and Arcelio Iglesias, historical leaders of the working class. At the same time, they will demand the freedom of the Five Heroes, unjustly incarcerated in U.S. federal prisons. □



## John Jay students learn of Cuban 5

Alex Majumder, Gail Walker, Prof. Luis Barrios and Ramsey Clark.

Students preparing for a profession within the so-called “justice system” in the United States heard a denunciation of that system’s inequalities and biases by one of its former top officers, who spoke about the persecution of the Cuban Five.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who has distinguished himself in the last few decades for his exposure of U.S. militarism and aggression worldwide, spoke April 26 before a full lecture room at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Clark, who in 1970 received an honorary degree from JJC, gave a short introduction to the history of the Cuban Revolution before taking apart the unfair prosecution of the five Cuban he-

roes, who have been unjustly held in U.S. prisons since 1998.

Rev. Luis Barrios, who teaches at JJC in the Latin American and Latino/a Studies Department, organized the lecture, which many of his students attended. JJC’s student body is 60 percent women, 40 percent Latino/a, 25 percent African American and 25 percent foreign born.

Barrios and Gail Walker are co-directors of the IFCO Pastors for Peace Organization, which organizes solidarity trips to Cuba. Shown in the picture are, from left, Alex Majumder of the International Action Center, Walker, Barrios and Clark.

— Report & photo by John Catalinotto



# Africa & the struggle against imperialism 40 years after Kwame Nkrumah

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

April 27 marked the 40th anniversary of the passing of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the founder of modern-day Ghana and a leading theoretician of the post-World War II national liberation movement for unity and socialism. Nkrumah's legacy is reflected in ongoing efforts of the peoples of Africa and the world who seek genuine freedom from colonialism, neocolonialism and imperialism.

Born in the Gold Coast (later renamed Ghana in 1957) on Sept. 21, 1909, Nkrumah grew up under the British colonial system. The people of the Gold Coast had fought Western domination beginning with the Atlantic slave trade.

After attending teacher training college in the Gold Coast, Nkrumah attended Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, a historically Black college. He earned his tuition from menial employment and part-time teaching.

Nkrumah's experiences in the U.S. from 1935 to 1945 — during the Great Depression and World War II — helped shape his outlook on African nationalism and anti-imperialism. Nkrumah spoke in African-American churches and interacted with the people, whom he perceived as still being connected with their ancestral cultures.

Nkrumah was influenced by some of the leading nationalist and left movements, including the African Students Association; the Universal Negro Improvement Association, founded by Marcus Garvey; the Council on African Affairs, headed then by W. E. B. DuBois and Dr. William Alphaeus Hunton; and C. L. R. James of the Trotskyist movement.

In 1945 Nkrumah traveled to England, where he worked toward the organization of the Fifth Pan-African Congress alongside George Padmore, a former member of the Communist International. The Congress, held in Manchester that October, was the most successful gathering of the Pan-African movement since the 1920s.

A Declaration to the Colonial Peoples of the World, drafted by Nkrumah, Padmore and DuBois, was approved by the more than 200 delegates. It states, "The Fifth Pan-African Congress calls on intellectuals and professional classes of the Colonies to awaken to their responsibilities.

"By fighting for trade union rights, the right to form co-operatives, freedom of the press, assembly, demonstration and strike, freedom to print and read the literature which is necessary for the education of the masses, you will be using the only means by which your liberties will be won and maintained. Today there is only one road to effective action — the organization of the masses." ("Africa Must Unite," Nkrumah, 1963)

## AFRICA & IMPERIALISM

Articles by Abayomi Azikiwe  
from the pages of Workers World

- Africa struggles against imperialism
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- Tunisian masses rebel
- South African workers strike
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## Liberation, unity & socialism more important today than ever

### Struggle for genuine independence

Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 at the invitation of the moderate United Gold Coast Convention, which retained him as an organizer. He helped build the Committee on Youth Organization as the militant, worker-oriented wing of the movement.

By June 1949, CYO youth and workers were frustrated with the slow pace of the UGCC and demanded that Nkrumah form a new organization. The Convention People's Party, a mass organization from its inception, was rooted among the workers, women and youth.

In 1950 the CPP organized a general strike demanding independence. Nkrumah was thrown into prison, where he remained for more than a year.

The CPP continued to organize and, through a 1951 British-controlled reform election, won the overwhelming support of the masses. Nkrumah was released from prison and put in charge of a transitional government that led the country to full independence on March 6, 1957.

Nkrumah believed that Ghana's independence would be meaningless if it was not connected with the total liberation and unity of Africa. In December 1958, he and Padmore, then his chief advisor on African affairs, organized the All-African People's Conference in the Ghana capital of Accra.

The meeting attracted 62 nationalist organizations from throughout Africa and the Diaspora. Patrice Lumumba, Shirley Graham DuBois and Frantz Fanon attended.

Ghana became a republic in 1960 and later embarked upon a socialist orientation aimed at genuine liberation. An alliance was formed with other progressive states in Guinea, Mali, Congo and Algeria, which gained independence in 1962.

Women were guaranteed seats within the National Assembly and provided scholarships. The National Council of Ghana Women, an important CPP government base, hosted the first All-African Women's Conference in 1960.

In 1962 the party and government adopted a program calling for the construction of a socialist economy. Closer ties were built with the Soviet Union, China and Cuba. Ghana became a base of operations for national liberation and resistance movements throughout the world.

### 'Neocolonialism the greatest danger'

Because of these achievements, the imperialists targeted Ghana and the other progressive African states. The independence of Congo was hijacked by Belgium and the U.S. in 1960 and 1961. As the class struggle intensified inside various African societies, the imperialists sponsored military and police coups in order to reverse the movement toward revolutionary pan-Africanism and socialism.

During the formation of the continental Organization of African Unity in 1963, Nkrumah wrote that "The greatest danger at present facing Africa is neo-colonialism and its major instrument, balkanization. ... As the nationalist struggle deepens in the colonial territories and independence appears on the horizon, the imperialist powers, fishing in the muddy waters of communalism, tribalism and sectional interests, endeavor to create fissions in the national front, in order to achieve fragmentation." ("Africa Must Unite," p. 173)

The CPP government fell victim to this process on Feb. 24, 1966, while Nkrumah was in Hanoi, Vietnam, on a mission aimed at ending the U.S. war there. With the assistance of the CIA and the U.S. State Department, reactionary military and po-

lice elements overthrew the Ghana state.

Nkrumah relocated in Guinea and continued to write and organize. After becoming ill in 1971, he sought medical treatment in Romania, where he died on April 27, 1972.

The lessons of the early phase of the African revolutionary struggle are relevant to more recent developments. Nkrumah identified U.S. imperialism as the main enemy of the revolution in his book "Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism," published in 1965.

Judging from events in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Egypt and other countries, Nkrumah's assessments have stood the test of time. Today the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) is involved in various military operations, including the overthrow of the Libyan government and efforts to destabilize and contain the people of Somalia.

With the African states' dependence on capitalist economic relations fostered by imperialism, the continent remains extremely underdeveloped, even though it is abundant in natural resources. For Africa to break the chains of poverty and stagnation, a revolution against class domination and imperialism must be waged with vigor.

In "Class Struggle in Africa," published in 1970, Nkrumah stressed that "The total liberation and unification of Africa under an All-African socialist government must be the primary objective of all Black revolutionaries throughout the world. It is an objective which, when achieved, will bring about the fulfillment of the aspirations of Africans and people of African descent everywhere.

"It will at the same time advance the triumph of the international socialist revolution, and the onward progress towards world communism, under which, every society is ordered on the principle of — from each according to his [and her] ability, to each according to his [and her] needs." □

## Special tribunal finds Liberian guilty of 'war crimes' Who will convict the NATO war criminals?

By **Abayomi Azikiwe**  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

Charles Taylor, former rebel leader and head of state in the West African country of Liberia, was convicted on April 26 by the Special Tribunal on Sierra Leone. The court, held in the Netherlands, was ostensibly set up by the United Nations in conjunction with the Sierra Leone government.



Fathia Nkrumah, W.E.B. DuBois, Kwame Nkrumah and Shirley DuBois.

Taylor's conviction represents the first case in which a sitting political leader was removed and put on trial for supposed violations of both international and domestic law.

The charges against Taylor stem from the civil war that erupted in Sierra Leone during the early 1990s. He was accused of arming and coordinating the actions of the so-called Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, which committed atrocities against the civilian population in a bid to seize power from successive civilian and military governments. Taylor maintains that he was not responsible for the crimes carried out by the RUF.

Testimony claimed that Taylor had financed the war through illegal diamond trafficking. However, the actual controllers of the international diamond industry — which is largely dominated by the Hatton firm, a subsidiary of the DeBeers Central Selling Organization in South Africa, and the Belgium-based Antwerp Company — were never mentioned.

Taylor led his own rebel campaign against a military regime in Liberia in 1989. Sgt. Samuel Doe, who overthrew

the government of President William Tolbert in 1980, had been initially supported by Taylor and many other Liberians.

(It's important to know that Liberia was formed during the 1820s as a purported haven for former African slaves from the U.S. In 1847 the country became a republic, but continued to remain under the political and economic control of the U.S. government and later the Firestone Rubber Co.)

Later Taylor was charged with embezzlement by the Doe government and fled to the U.S., where he had earlier obtained a degree from Bentley College. After being jailed, he reportedly escaped from prison and traveled to Libya, where he received military training and funding from the government of Col. Moammar Gadhafi.

After forming the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, Taylor began to launch military attacks against the Doe government. In 1997, after years of protracted war, he was elected the 22nd president of the Republic of Liberia.

By 2003, Taylor was under tremen-

*Continued on page 11*



# Movement Agenda: NATO summit, RNC, DNC

**May Day** in the USA looks like it will be a great time to unite all sections of the working class.

You might ask, “Unite for what?” Unite to pursue the class struggle on all fronts. The next battle comes up right away. It’s life and death. It involves confronting the imperialist war drive.

The movement is mobilizing because NATO is holding a summit on May 20-21 in Chicago. NATO must be stopped.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was — from 1949 until 1991 — a military conspiracy of the major imperialist countries in Western Europe and North America to crush whatever post-World War II workers’ revolutions might occur in Europe, while holding the Soviet Union at missile point.

By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved. So did its military alliance known as the Warsaw Pact. But not NATO.

Still under U.S. leadership, NATO was converted into a worldwide police force of the former colonial powers — except for Japan. In 2012 language, NATO is the armed agent of the worldwide 1%.

NATO has made three major military interventions since 1991. In one of them, far from Europe, the people of Afghanistan may have the final word and, through sheer determination and persistence, force out the well-armed occupiers after 11 years of the most uneven war.

But the other two cases satisfied the imperialists enough that they consider them “model” interventions: against Yugoslavia in 1995 and 1999 and against Libya in 2011. NATO destroyed these countries. The imperialists picked up the pieces as plunder. The casualties — among the imperialist armed forces — were so small that few people in the NATO countries thought about it enough to question the “humanitarian” pretext for the wars.

Now a similar NATO model is

under consideration for imperialist intervention against Syria.

It is this possibility and the whole existence of NATO that is driving progressives to mobilize a major national protest in Chicago on May 20. The protest now includes the Occupy movement, labor and religious forces. For more information on May 20 in Chicago, see [Cang8.org](http://Cang8.org), [nation-alpeaceconference.org](http://nation-alpeaceconference.org), or [iacenter.org](http://iacenter.org).

As part of building for the May 20 protest, Workers World Party has called a meeting in Chicago on the evening of May 17. It will be at the Electrical Workers union (UE) hall at 6:30 p.m. at 37 S. Ashland Ave. WWP First Secretary Larry Holmes will be among the speakers.

For us at Workers World, the demand in Chicago is simple: Abolish NATO!

Following the Chicago action, the movement will look ahead to the end of the summer to expose the reactionary and anti-working-class role of the two big U.S. capitalist parties at the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

The RNC is taking place in Tampa, Fla., with the protest against this reactionary, racist, anti-working-class, imperialist war-mongering party set for Aug. 27. (See [marchonthernc.com](http://marchonthernc.com).)

The DNC’s venue is Charlotte, N.C., home base of Bank of America and Wells Fargo and the second largest financial center in the country after New York. Protesters there have called for a “March on Wall Street South” during the DNC, Sept. 1-6. The Sept. 2 march will point out that the Democratic Party, no less than the Republican, represents the interests of the 1%. (See [protestdnc.org](http://protestdnc.org).)

On May Day workers come out in struggle all over the world in an expression of international solidarity against the global 1%. The struggle to end imperialist wars and the capitalist governments that wage them is the next shoe dropping. □



PHOTO: PEOPLE'S VIDEO NETWORK

## From Consuela Lee to Mumia

# An appreciation of Gil Noble

By **Monica Moorehead**  
New York

African-American television journalist Gil Noble leaves behind a tremendous, inspiring legacy that should continue to be deeply explored and respected. Host of the award-winning, Black-oriented show “Like It Is,” based in New York, Noble died at the age of 80 on April 5 in a New Jersey hospital. He had suffered a massive stroke last summer.

Hundreds of people, including cultural and political figures such as City Councilperson Charles Barron, Harry Belafonte, Danny Glover, Minister Louis Farrakhan and former editor of Essence magazine Susan Taylor, paid tribute to Noble at his funeral and memorial. It was held April 13 at the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem.

Noble became the host of “Like It Is” at New York’s ABC affiliate in 1975. Over a period of 36 years, until his stroke, he interviewed hundreds of guests. Every Sunday his shows focused primarily on the struggle of African peoples for self-determination and liberation in the diaspora.

He won seven Emmy awards for the following documentaries: “El Hajj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X),” “Paul Robeson,” “Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,” “Adam Clayton Powell Jr.,” “Decade of Struggle,” “Essay on Drugs” and “Outstanding Series.” Not only was Noble the host of “Like It Is,” but he produced it as well — meaning that he had the authority to pick and choose who to have on his show, no matter whether the studio heads liked it or not.

Many of his interviewees were both well-known and lesser-known artists, activists, politicians and historians, both in the U.S. and around the world. This writer had the honor of knowing Noble on two different occasions. The late great actor Ossie Davis and I had the honor of appearing on “Like It Is” to promote a Madison Square Garden Theater rally for death-row political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal in May 2000. Noble hosted a number of shows on Abu-Jamal’s case and clearly expressed his hope that Mumia would have a new, fair trial to help overturn a murder conviction. In 2011 Abu-Jamal was freed from death row, but is now serving a life sentence without parole. Besides Davis, others who came to the Garden to show support for Mumia were Mos Def, Ed Asner, Johnnie Cochran, David Dinkins and many more. The interview, taped a month before the rally, helped fill the theater to its capacity of 6,000 seats.

### Support for an Alabama school

The other distinct chance meeting that I had with Noble was of a more personal nature. On Aug. 6, 1988, Noble traveled to Snow Hill, Ala., to speak at a rally in support

of Snow Hill Institute for the Performing Arts, founded in 1980 by my mother, jazz pianist Consuela Lee. The Institute promoted the teaching of jazz in all its art forms to poor, rural African-American children in Alabama’s Black Belt.

Months later, Noble sent a film crew to Snow Hill to take footage of my mother’s efforts to revitalize Snow Hill Institute, which had been founded in 1893 by her grandfather, William James Edwards, to help educate former slaves. In December 1988, Noble had my mother’s students perform on his “Like It Is” program while they were on tour in New York. While showing the Snow Hill footage, Noble explained the difficult campaign to save an isolated school like Snow Hill Institute within the overall historic framework of the Civil Rights struggle of the 1960s, especially in Alabama.

Noble also wrote a moving piece about Snow Hill and my mother’s CD, “Piano Voices,” when it was released in 2001. Being an accomplished jazz pianist himself, Noble wrote on the CD’s jacket, “Consuela Lee ... even her very name swings like the end of a jazz chorus. Years ago, this magnificent artist invited me to come down to Alabama to speak to the students at her Snow Hill school. What I saw and heard at Snow Hill brought tears to my eyes. Here were grade school children playing on almost makeshift instruments the arrangements of geniuses like Milt Jackson and Charlie Parker.

“On top of this, Consuela Lee sat down to the piano. I was transfixed. Then and there I decided to find a way to have Consuela and those kids on my TV show in New York. I did.

“Now, many years later, this glorious CD has been recorded — a chance to hear this stunning pianist do her own compositions and her own absorbing reading of Duke Ellington. Steady now ... you ‘bout to be wiped out.” Go to [tinyurl.com/6tdd6t6](http://tinyurl.com/6tdd6t6) to hear parts one and two of Noble’s interview with Consuela Lee.

Gil Noble exemplified tremendous integrity, dedication and fortitude. He used his journalistic skills to not only showcase great cultural and political contributions of Black people, but to help further the struggle for social equality. He was a great anti-racist fighter and humanitarian who also showed solidarity with other oppressed peoples, such as the Palestinians.

In his autobiography, “Black Is the Color of My TV Tube,” he writes, “Many in this business say I am too serious. I believe I am not serious. The condition of Black people today is serious to me, and that condition requires serious action. I will be preoccupied with the question of race until racism is dead.” Gil Noble presente! For more information go to [gilnoblearchive.com](http://gilnoblearchive.com). □

## MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper.

Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes:

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**Black Youth: Repression & Resistance** LeiLani Dowell

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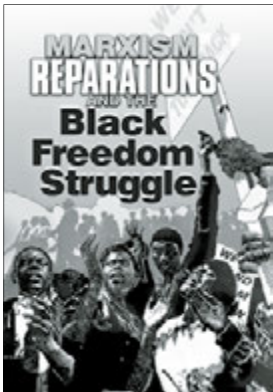
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COVER GRAPHIC: SAHU BARRON



# Who will convict the NATO war criminals?

*Continued from page 9*

dous pressure from at least two other guerrilla armies to resign. By this time he had fallen out of favor with the U.S. and other Western-backed leaders in Liberia and West Africa.

Taylor was brought up on charges by the tribunal and agreed to resign in exchange for asylum in Nigeria. Thousands of troops from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), backed by the U.S., entered Liberia to prepare for a political transition. An election later resulted in the ascendancy of current President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a trained economist and a former Taylor supporter.

In 2006 Taylor was extradited back to Liberia, where he was immediately arrested and sent to the Netherlands to await trial.

## Political hypocrisy as international law

There is no doubt that horrendous crimes were committed by forces associated with Taylor in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Nonetheless, in recent years The Hague has become a center for the persecution of African leaders for crimes that dwarf those committed by leaders of the imperialist states. Along with the special tribunal, the International Criminal Court has helped destabilize both Sudan and Libya through indictments and threatened kidnappings.

Former Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milosevic was also indicted, deposed and arrested to face a special tribunal. Charges against Milosevic were motivated by U.S.-NATO policies that broke up the last socialist state in Europe during the 1990s.

Yet the crimes carried out by the U.S., Britain, France and other allied states against the peoples of Iraq, Palestine, Af-

ghanistan, Colombia, Somalia, Libya, Sudan and beyond are not even mentioned by the putative international legal bodies in The Hague. The U.S. and British governments concocted false allegations against the Iraq government in 2002 and 2003 that led to an eight-year war, resulting in more than 1 million deaths and the displacement of millions of people.

The war in Afghanistan is in its 11th year with no end in sight. Untold numbers of Afghans have been killed and millions have been displaced and traumatized.

The North African state of Libya was attacked in 2011 through a rebel insurgency engineered by the U.S., France and Britain. When this did not succeed, the Pentagon and NATO imposed an arms embargo and naval blockade against the Gadhafi government.

The Pentagon and NATO then carried out 26,000 sorties and nearly 10,000 airstrikes against Libya, killing thousands of people and displacing 2 million more. More than \$160 billion in Libyan foreign assets were seized, while a puppet regime was installed that routinely violates the human rights of Libyans and foreign nationals. No one has been held accountable for these war crimes.

These crimes, committed under successive U.S. regimes, are coupled with economic crimes at home involving the wholesale theft of trillions of dollars in home equity, wages, municipal tax dollars and pension funds.

Working people and the nationally oppressed must be suspicious of Western platitudes about international norms and law. "International law" has become a tool of Western imperialism, whether dished out by the United Nations Security Council or other institutions, such as special tribunals and the ICC. □

# RACIST ATROCITIES & CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

*Continued from page 7*

live with the memory of being put in handcuffs and treated as if she had committed a crime — when she was guilty only of being Black and emotionally distraught. For this she was handcuffed and taken to jail.

It becomes more evident with each new day that the police are violent and routinely get away with killing people of color and other brutal acts of oppression and repression because they act as an occupying army in oppressed communities. The police are part of the capitalist state apparatus, an entity whose sole function is to be the buffer between the bosses and the workers and oppressed. It is those whom we must sell our labor to in order to survive who benefit from the racism prevalent in U.S. society.

## Why ruling class needs racism

Racism is a tool that keeps workers separate and apart. Ultimately white workers will find their position is weakened by allowing separate and unequal conditions to exist and adhering to backward beliefs of inferiority based on race. More than being just a tool, though, racism in U.S. society has been deeply ingrained because U.S. capital was amassed through some of the most extreme and brutal forms of repression.

National oppression — the systemic oppression of sectors of the working class based on cultural, linguistic and historically shared circumstances — is a permanent feature of capitalist society because of its usefulness in keeping the working class divided. But it also persists because the most revolutionary sectors are those who have suffered the most brutal forms of degradation and repression — primarily the Black, Latino/a and Indigenous nations.

Revolutionaries say that political consciousness usually lags behind objective developments. Though economic conditions have worsened drastically for op-

pressed communities since the recession started four years ago, there has been no mass response yet. There have been some tragic and heartbreaking incidents in which massive numbers of oppressed workers showed up to apply for jobs or social services, but in most cases those events did not raise mass consciousness for a general fightback from the perspective of the oppressed.

The subjective or political consciousness only lags, but not forever. There is no telling what historical acts will lead to a mass response.

It remains to be seen if the murder of Trayvon Martin will lead to a sustained response, but its aftermath shows that the sense of needing to fight racism has grown, along with the understanding that the abuse of communities of color by police is systemic.

The cases of police killings and brutality cannot be separated from the economic conditions that prevail in communities of color — conditions of high unemployment, homelessness, poverty, a crumbling infrastructure and declining social services, and the criminalization of those who suffer the most desperate conditions. The conditions are stubborn. Capitalism finds itself in a deepening crisis, and it is in times like these that not only does the state become more repressive and the government begin to pass laws further curtailing democratic rights, but also the tool of racism is more aggressively used to pit the dominant sector of the working class against oppressed workers.

It is insidious but not inevitable. Revolutionaries should be in solidarity with the aims and desires of the most oppressed, but not abandon white workers to a debased right wing or ultra-right-wing. It is in the interest of all to rebel, fight racism, support self-determination of the oppressed and fight against the capitalist system. □

## Philadelphia

# Fight to save schools



WW PHOTO: JOE PIETTE

*Continued from page 3*

having our tax money spent to educate workers they don't need, the corporations and banks push to lower their own measly taxes and pressure politicians to spend public funds on bailing out the banks.

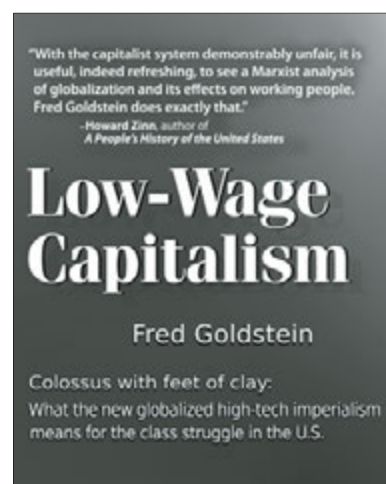
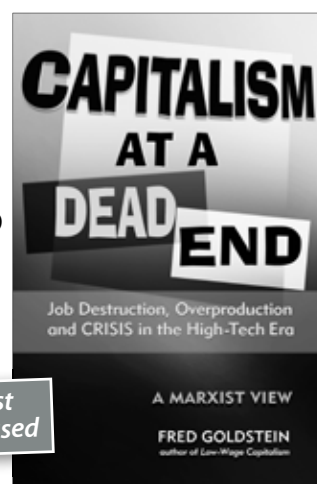
Capitalism is proving bankrupt when it comes to providing for human needs and social services, including education. A fightback movement is certain to develop in response to the Knudsen Plan. As dev-

astating as these proposed cuts to Philadelphia's schools could be, it would be a mistake to limit our demands to school reform issues.

To be successful, this struggle must also be a fight for jobs, union wages and benefits, and for an end to the school-to-prison pipeline. And to have lasting success, the fight must be against the greedy, rotten, capitalist system that puts profits before all else. □

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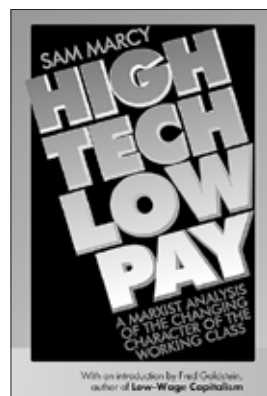


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# Ocupar Wall Street se une a los/as inmigrantes y a la clase obrera

Por Teresa Gutiérrez

Imagínese estar en Dallas en lo que parece ser un día normal.

Pero la ciudad está vacía. No hay casi nadie en las calles, oficinas, apartamentos o restaurantes. No hay automóviles, camiones o taxis circulando.

Parece el comienzo de la última película de desastres.

Pero lamentablemente esto transmite la realidad de lo que ha ocurrido a la comunidad inmigrante en Estados Unidos.

Más de un millón de trabajadores/as han sido deportados/as de Estados Unidos desde la elección presidencial de 2008.

Es como si casi toda la ciudad de Dallas, con una población de 1,2 millones, hubiera sido deshabitada.

La abrumadora realidad de que más de un millón de trabajadores/as indocumentados/as hayan sido deportados/as en este corto periodo proyecta un cuadro sombrío sobre las manifestaciones anuales del Primero de Mayo, día de trabajadores/as e inmigrantes en este país.

Cada inmigrante en este país ha sido tocado/a por estas deportaciones masivas.

Añada a esto las racistas y represivas legislaciones antiinmigrante que se han dado en el país, y el resultado es un abrumador terror dirigido por el sistema capitalista contra este sector súper explotado de la clase obrera.

Esto sólo, habla de la importancia de las manifestaciones del Primero de Mayo que se llevan a cabo en todo el país.

Además, el racismo sistémico y la violencia hacia las personas de color, ejemplificada por el asesinato de Trayvon Martin, además de la profundización de la crisis actual de empleos, vivienda y educación, hace que la necesidad de que los/as trabajadores/as y oprimidos/as salgan a las calles el Primero de Mayo, sea aún más decisivo.

## Buenos acontecimientos en Nueva York

Es por eso que los avances en los esfuerzos organizativos este año para el Primero de Mayo en Nueva York sean tan bienvenidos. Estos acontecimientos también proporcionan lecciones importantes, muchas de los cuales requerirán un análisis más detenido el 2 de mayo y después.

En los últimos meses, una agrupación dentro del movimiento de Ocupar Wall Street se ha reunido cientos de veces para tratar de involucrarse en el Primero de Mayo. Las discusiones y deliberaciones en estas reuniones demuestran cuánto los eventos que estallaron en Wall Street en septiembre pasado significan que un movimiento ha nacido realmente en este país.

Cuánto tiempo durará este movimiento y hacia dónde irá queda por verse.

Pero definitivamente se ha producido un movimiento principalmente de jóvenes. En su centro está el deseo de romper con todo lo que representa Wall Street. Es un movimiento muy anticapitalista.

Mientras que la agrupación del Primero de Mayo de Ocupar Wall Street no es en absoluto homogénea, al final una voz resonó la más fuerte. Esa voz estaba mara-



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villosamente orientada hacia la clase trabajadora. No quería cometer errores con los/as inmigrantes, especialmente los/as indocumentados, que los/as OWS reconocieron que habían revivido en 2006 el Primero de Mayo a nivel nacional en este país.

No fue fácil, fue doloroso y fue frustrante. Estuvo y está plagado de contradicciones y deficiencias.

Pero al final todos los caminos llevaron a un Primero de Mayo unitario en Nueva York.

A cada vuelta, la agrupación Primero de Mayo de Ocupar Wall Street estuvo abierta a las decisiones tomadas por aquellos/as que habían venido organizando marchas anuales del Primero de Mayo, incluso si no era su primer instinto hacerlo.

A principios de enero, por ejemplo, un buen debate tuvo lugar sobre la convocatoria de una huelga general para el Primero de Mayo. Muchos/as en el movimiento pro derechos de inmigrantes, como los representados por las opiniones de miembros de la Coalición Primero de Mayo por los derechos de trabajadores/as e inmigrantes, políticamente quisieran llamar a una huelga general. ¿Quién no desearía que los/as trabajadores/as detuvieran sus labores a la luz de los ataques contra la clase trabajadora aquí y alrededor del mundo?

¿Pero, existen las condiciones correctas y adecuadas? ¿Saldrían los/as trabajadores/as en forma masiva, o sería la “huelga general” un pequeña agrupación de activistas y algunos/as trabajadores/as?

Al final todos/as convinieron en que la convocatoria de una huelga general necesita dientes genuinos para hacerla una realidad y no era apropiada en el clima actual en Nueva York.

Otro debate fue alrededor de los permisos. OWS cree firmemente en no solicitar permisos, una posición honorable. Otros/as organizadores/as se pronunciaron sobre su responsabilidad al representar a una población vulnerable que de suscitarse una confrontación, no sólo pas-

aría la noche en la cárcel, sino que podría ser deportada.

Los/as organizadores/as de grupos de derechos laborales e inmigrantes, explicamos que no podríamos poner conscientemente a los/as indocumentados en peligro. Esto no debe interpretarse en el sentido de que los/as inmigrantes tienen miedo o no son militantes. Pero estaba claro que esto era más una cuestión de privilegio, especialmente por los/as jóvenes blancos/as. Esto influyó a los/as de OWS a aceptar solicitar permisos.

Lo importante en todo este proceso es esta cuestión: ¿puede la unidad y la rica relación de trabajo que se ha establecido entre los sectores sindicales, de inmigrantes y movimientos OWS fortalecerse y crecer? ¿Es posible construir sobre estas relaciones para profundizar la lucha de clases en este país?

¿Pueden la ira y la indignación contra el sistema capitalista mostrado por los/as jóvenes en el movimiento de OWS expandirse y ampliarse para convertirse en una amenaza más grande para la clase gobernante?

Todo esto aún está por verse.

## Lo que se necesita para amenazar el 1 %

Una de las limitaciones sobresalientes de la agrupación Primero de Mayo de Ocupar Wall Street en Nueva York ha sido en términos de representación. La inmensa mayoría de la gente en las reuniones ha sido blanca.

Nueva York es abrumadoramente una ciudad marrón y negra. Nueva York es una ciudad de los/as oprimidos/as.

Para que un movimiento realmente se amplíe, sea exitoso y se convierta en una amenaza real para el 1%, debe obtener correctamente la cuestión del racismo. La solidaridad y la unidad con el pueblo oprimido no sólo es importante; es decisivo, sobre todo en el vientre de la bestia imperialista.

¿Qué podría asustar y amenazan más al 1% que jóvenes que odian al capitalismo y son negros/as, marrones/as y blancos/as?

Hay una cosa que les amenazaría un poco más. Y es cuando esos/as jóvenes multinacionales están al unísono con la clase trabajadora.

Por eso es un avance positivo el que este año en Nueva York, sectores del movimiento sindical impidieron que hubiera dos manifestaciones separadas del Primero de Mayo. Los/as miembros de base y otros/as en los sindicatos han empujado lo suficiente para que incluso el Central Labor Council de la ciudad haya respaldado la manifestación del Primero de Mayo en Union Square, que ha sido organizada por miembros de la Coalición 1 de mayo desde el 2005.

De hecho fue la consigna propuesta por uno de los jóvenes de OWS — originario de Bolivia — que muchos sindicatos acogieron. Esta consigna es: “Legalizar, organizar y sindicalizar.”

Esta consigna, si se aplica de manera masiva y real, podría ser muy importante en avanzar cuestiones de toda la clase trabajadora en este país.

La cuestión sobre la mesa — el elefante en la habitación — es: ¿puede la unidad y solidaridad galvanizadas para el Primero de Mayo 2012 tomar otro gran paso adelante después del 1 de mayo?

¿Qué ruta tomará esa unidad? ¿Se descarrilará en el callejón sin salida de las elecciones de 2012? ¿Se disipará o tomará un giro Woodstock?

¿O permanecerá un elemento unido para librar una verdadera batalla contra el capitalismo?

La única manera de que los/as trabajadores/as indocumentados/as pueden ganar la legalización es si el movimiento sigue unido, en las calles y militante. La única manera de que los/as trabajadores/as nacidos/as en EEUU pueden acabar con el aumento del desempleo y detener a los bancos de apropiarse de sus hogares, la única manera de que los/as jóvenes trabajadores/as pueden cancelar su deuda de estudiante o ir la Universidad, la única manera de que podamos detener el racismo y el terror de la policía, es si seguimos en las calles, independientes de quienes que están atados al sistema capitalista.

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